

Marietta Ga. 7.30.63

Mayor Ivan Allen Jr.,
City Hall,
Atlanta, Georgia,

My dear Sir:-

I live in Marietta and possibly do not have the right to address a letter to you, however, I could not resist the temptation. I notice in the papers partial extract of your statement before the Senate Committee on the Civil Rights Bill. You refer to the fact that the negro can walk into a bank and borrow money, can walk into a department store and purchase goods and can go into a grocery store and purchase groceries, but when time comes to eat, he is not welcome at a restaurant and his status changes to a second class citizen.

These segregated businesses were established by their owners on the basis of choosing their customers; they worked hard, put up their own money and when they have made a success, the negro wants to walk in and eat with the whites instead of other negroes. Just why he does not want to eat with other negroes is difficult to understand and this to me is a strong argument in favor of segregation. He put no money nor work into these segregated businesses, but now wants to tell the owners how to operate them.

However, the negro loses no rights by these segregated establishments and does not change into a second class citizen. There is no law against him establishing his own integrated eating places, hotels, theaters, etc., and then the public would have the choice of integrated or segregated facilities. He has the freedom of choice to establish his own integrated business, the same as the white man has to establish his segregated business.

I presume you have a swimming pool at your home. Is it integrated? Is your home integrated? How many negro clerical workers do you employ in your office at the City Hall? How many negro clerical workers does the Atlanta Chamber of Commerce employ? Some of the Directors of the Atlanta Chamber of Commerce are bankers and I presume some of them approved the Chamber's resolution asking certain Atlanta businesses to integrate. Has the banks with whom these executives are connected integrated? If so how many negro tellers do they have, how many negro stenographers do they employ and how many negro executives do they have? Is the Ivan Allen Marshall Co., integrated? If so how many negro clerks do they have; how many negro stenographers do they

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employeand how many negro executives do they have?

I am not a rabble rouser; am 73 years of age; have lived in Marietta all my life; have many **ffiends** among the colored folks in my town and on a percentage basis of our acquaintances, expect I have more real colored friends than you, but I don't eat with them and they don't eat with me and this does not mean that I am better or worse than they.

I realize I have asked some personal questions but in view of your public stand on the negro question, I **think** the public has the right to know how you handle this matter personally.

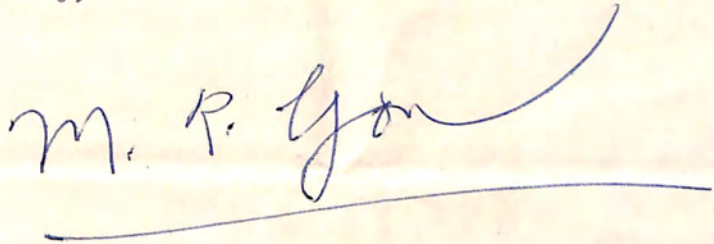
I am enclosing an extract from a speech by Abraham Lincoln on the negro delivered more than a 100 years ago.

I have written similar letters to the Kennedys but they are unanswered.

Yours very truly,

MRL^L

M.R. LYON
207 Freyer Drive
Marietta, Georgia,



A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "M. R. Lyon". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line that spans across the width of the signature.